

Message Text

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22

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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 992

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, BM

SUBJECT: EDITORIAL COMMENT ON OPIUM ERADICATION

ENGLISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPER, "THE GUARDIAN", PUBLISHED BALANCE EDITORIAL ON FEBRUARY 16 EXTOLLING EFFORTS TO ERADICATE OPIUM CROPS. POINTS MADE INCLUDED EFFECT OF DRUGS ON ECONOMY, PROBLEMS OF RECLAIMING PRODUCTIVE WORKERS AFTER ADDICTION, AND VOLUNTARY EFFORT BY POPULACE REQUIRED TO ELIMINATE PROBLEM. SIGNIFICANTLY, EDITORIAL MENTIONED THAT GUB COOPERATING WITH "INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AGENCIES FIGHTING PRODUCTION AND PROLIFERATION OF NARCOTIC DRUGS". REFERENCE TO COOPERATION WITH OUTSIDE WORLD IS RARE. TO CONTRARY, EDITORIAL COMMENTS USUALLY MENTION OUTSIDE WORLD ONLY IN NEGATIVE SENSE; I.E., BRITISH PROMOTING OPIUM CULTIVATION DURING COLONIAL DAYS AND WESTERN HIPPIES NOW INFLUENCING OTHERS TO INDULGE. HIGH RANKING GUB OFFICIAL CONFIRMED THAT TERM "INTERNATIONAL NARCOTIC AGENCIES" REFERRED TO USG NARCOTICS PROGRAM AS WELL AS PENDING UN CROP SUBSTITUTION PROGRAM. EDITORIAL FOLLOWED NEWS REPORT IN PREVIOUS DAYS PRESS THAT 90 MORE ACRES OF POPPIES DESTROYED IN KACHIN STATE AS PART OF ONGOING CAMPAIGN AGAINST OPIUM CULTIVATION.

OSBORN

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